Purchase of Krasnopal despite CAG objections

633. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "MoD ignores CAG, buys Krasnopal" as reported in the Hindustan Times dated the 9th February, 2002;

(b) if so, whether Government have overlooked the objections of the CAG and signed fresh contract with Russia for the purchase of Krasnopal TGM; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. C&AG's observations have been taken into consideration while taking the decision to procure additional Krasnopal TGMs.

(c) Does not arise.

Enquiry committee regarding fire in Ordnance Factory, Itarasi

†634. SHRI P. K. MAHESHARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received the report of the Enquiry Committee which was set-up to assess the causes and losses due to fire incident in Itarasi Ordnance Depot;

(b) if so, the main recommendations made by the said Enquiry Committee in its report; and

(c) if not, by when this report is likely to be received by Government and the reasons for delay in the enquiry?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Board of Enquiry set up to assess the causes and loss due to explosion in a building of Ordnance Factory Itarasi on 30.11.2002, where drying of Nitroglycertine Nitrocellulose is carried out, has submitted its report to the Ordnance Factory Board and is under examination. According to the findings of the Board of Enquiry, the likely cause of the explosion was shock received on the dry and hot floor surface due to slipping because of unbalanced condition. The main recommendations made by the Board are to revise the temperature of hot air for drying with automatic cut-off at 50°C; bringing down the explosive

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.